

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete list of the pending claims.

1. (Withdrawn – Currently amended) A method of identifying a compound capable of preventing or inhibiting viral infection of a host cell, the method comprising:
 - (a) preparing a target comprising the amino acid sequence of a viral fusion initiation region (FIR), wherein the FIR is SEQ ID NO:4 from a virus having a membrane fusion protein comprising: (i) at least two extended alpha helices, (ii) a fusion peptide, and (iii) a fusion initiation region;
 - (b) screening a plurality of compounds to identify at least one compound that binds to the target, whereby a target-binding compound is identified;
 - (c) screening at least one target-binding compound to identify a target-binding compound capable of preventing or inhibiting [[viral]] infection of a host cell by a virus [[with]] having a fusion protein comprising the FIR.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Withdrawn – Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the target [[is]] comprises a peptide analog, a peptide derivative, or a peptide mimic.
4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the compound is an antibody or functional fragment thereof.
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Withdrawn – Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the virus is selected from the group consisting of Lassa Virus, Lymphocytic Choriomeningitis Virus (LCMV), Junin Virus, Machupo Virus, Guanarito Virus, Sabia Virus, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Virus, Murine Hepatitis Virus (MHV), Bovine Coronavirus, Canine Coronavirus, Feline Infectious Peritonitis Virus, Ebola Virus, Marburg Virus, Influenza A Virus, Influenza B Virus, or Influenza C Virus, Measles Virus, Mumps Virus, Canine Distemper Virus, Newcastle Disease Virus, Human Immunodeficiency Virus 1 (HIV-1),

~~Human Immunodeficiency Virus 2 (HIV 2), Human T-cell Lymphotrophic Virus 1 (HTLV 1), Human T-cell Lymphotrophic Virus 2 (HTLV 2), Human Intracisternal A-type Particle 1 (HIAP 1), and Human Intracisternal A-type Particle 2 (HIAP 2).~~

7. (Currently amended) An isolated peptide comprising [[:]]
[[[a]]] an amino acid sequence or analogous sequence therein the amino acid sequence is SEQ ID NO:4, thereto of a viral fusion initiation region (FIR); or
~~(b) a functional segment of a FIR or analogous sequence thereto from a virus belonging to one of the group of virus families consisting of arenaviruses coronaviruses, filoviruses, orthomyxoviruses, paramyxoviruses, and retroviruses, wherein the functional segment does not include HIV 1 TM CS3.~~
- 8-12. (Cancelled)
13. (Withdrawn – Currently amended) A method of treating or preventing a viral infection comprising administering to a patient a compound identified by ~~any of the methods of claims 1 to 6~~ method according to claim 1, 3, 4 or 6.
14. (Withdrawn – Currently amended) A method of treating or preventing a viral infection comprising administering to a patient a peptide ~~of any of claims 7 to 12~~ according to claim 7 or 26.
15. (Withdrawn – Currently amended) A method of treating or preventing a viral infection comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a composition comprising [[of]] a recombinant DNA molecule that enables or stimulates the patient to produce the peptide ~~of any of claims 7 to 12~~ according to claim 7 or 26.
- 16-25. (Cancelled)
26. (New) The peptide of claim 7, wherein the peptide consists of SEQ ID NO:4.